

2C — WEDNESDAY  
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*Reno Gazette*

*10: Ken Greenberg  
from: Jane*

A daily look at people, places and events making news in the Reno-Sparks area, including the most-recently fi

# METROWATCH

## Tahoe utility angry with feds Over funding for sewer line

By Jeff DeLong  
RENO GAZETTE-JOURNAL

Angered by what they call a failure by the federal government to live up to its promises, officials at Lake Tahoe utility are poised to halt replacement of an aging and spill-prone sewer line.

On Thursday, directors of the South Tahoe Public Utility District will decide whether to proceed with replacement of the 27-mile-long line that carries treated wastewater from South Lake Tahoe over a mountain pass to Alpine County.

President Clinton touted the project as one of high priority during his 1997 environmental forum at the lake, when he announced appropriations of \$7.1 million for the \$37 million project. Last month, another \$2.5 million appropriation was announced. But the Tahoe utility has yet to receive any money.

Utility officials said \$22 million already has been spent on planning and building; nearly 11 miles of line have been replaced and another three miles would be replaced in

## TODAY'S FOLLOW-UP

PEOPLE AND EVENTS THAT  
HAVE MADE HEADLINES

"We're saddened and disappointed it's come to this," said Director Duane Wallace. "If it leaks, it's on their head."

Federal law prohibits storage of treated wastewater in the Tahoe Basin. It is rich in nutrients that cause algae to flourish in Lake Tahoe and rob it of its famed clarity.

Constructed in the late 1960s, the lengthy pipeline has experienced numerous spills.

One 1995 incident dumped 250,000 gallons of effluent into the watershed of the Upper Truckee River, Lake Tahoe's largest tributary.

Officials from the Environmental Protection Agency said they

want the project completed, but called the utility's request unrealistic. The utility wants money spent years ago to qualify as a local match.

The EPA only can apply money spent since the \$7.1 million was appropriated in October 1997, said Ken Greenberg, a member of the agency's Lake Tahoe Team.

To do otherwise "would really be a very significant deviation from our grant procedure," he said.

The EPA should be able to give the utility some upfront funding of up to \$4.5 million in a couple of months and reimburse it for many of its expenses between October 1997 and through the 1999 construction season, he said.

"We'll be as flexible as we can," Greenberg said.

But utility officials are unhappy with the EPA's position.

"We screwed up," Wallace said, referring to a \$5 million short-term loan the utility arranged in anticipation of the \$7.1 million federal payment. "We trusted them and put our money up first."

## SOUNDING BOARD

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The Gazette-Journal wants to hear your opinions. Call Sounding Board, leave a short message with your views on topics important to you. We'll publish selected items. You don't have to leave your name, but please tell us where you live.

■ IF HILLARY CLINTON ever wanted to run for president, I would probably vote for her. She has really exhibited a lot of grace under fire and from what I've seen of our choices this year, she'd make a good one. Stead

■ I WILL VOTE NO NO on the school bond. Instead I would take the amount of money that the candidates are spending on slamming each other and all their signs and give the money to the state of Nevada Board of Education and I think they could build some really nice schools. Sparks

■ I'D REALLY LIKE to thank the Reno Gazette-Journal for the voters guide that was published on Friday, Oct. 30. With my sample ballot in hand, I found the guide very helpful and useful for

and candidates that I wasn't real far with. I want to thank you very much for a great public service. Reno

■ I WANTED TO thank the RG putting in all the candidate endorsements for the election. It's given an excellent guideline to vote completely the opposite on everything. I think says it all. Reno

■ FOR ALL OF you opposed to school bond, it would possibly mean about \$21 more a year on property taxes. Most of you probably spent or more on lunch today. Our child and their education are the hope of the future. Wake up! Reno

■ I WOULD LIKE to remind Emma Pulveda that it is not illegal or immoral to voice one's opinion out loud in public. In this country no matter how distasteful she finds the comment, if she were illegal she would have been arrested a long time ago. Reno

■ THIS ELECTION THING is like bunch of kids. He did this, she did the Vote for me, I'm a better person. It's bunch of bull and I'm glad it's over. Sparks

■ I WENT OUT this morning to get my newspaper and there was a clean fresh smell in the air and I couldn't figure out what it was and then I realized it was that the campaign is over. Ya-hoo.